



St Peter's Parish, Surry Hills

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Fr John Macdonald, Admn

Calendar: **Pentecost Sunday – Year A**

Livestreaming of Parish Masses - The Archdiocese of Sydney is regularly updating its website and social media platforms with the latest information during the Covid-19 crisis. We refer you in particular to the life streamed masses at which Archbishop Fisher, O.P. is presiding, and to his homilies, pastoral letters by clicking on the link <https://www.sydneycatholic.org/live-masses/> The crisis is also affording the people and clergy alike an opportunity to get to know better our chief pastor and his mind on various issues and topics.

Rest In Peace request envelopes should be placed on the collection plate with the usual offering of \$10.00. **We pray for** Frederick, Edward & Margaret M Hailwood, Margaret D Hailwood (21/9), Joyce Hailwood & Marge Heaney, Joan McEvoy, Fr William Dominic Creede, CSsR, Mary Lewis (7/5), Stella Cauci (20/5), Robert May. Lawrence Macdonald (27/5) and Iris Mercirca (27/5)

Parishioner Email addresses – The present crisis has prompted us to update our parishioners email list. We would be most grateful to receive the email addresses of any parishioner who has not been receiving the parish bulletin electronically. Please encourage anyone you know in the parish who is not receiving this bulletin to send their e-mail address to st61538@bigpond.net.au



We can drink together, so why can't we pray together?

CHURCHS' PLEA Sydney's Roman Catholic Archbishop Anthony Fisher is leading the charge of religious leaders concerned they are being left out in the cold as NSW moves to ease restrictions on the number of people allowed to gather in public.

Courtesy of Daily Telegraph Sydney 28 May 2020

Following the success of the petition of Sydney Catholics to the Premier of NSW, we are now permitted to have up to fifty people at Mass, exclusive of those directly involved in conducting the Liturgy, Archbishop Fisher's interview in the Catholic Weekly petition was granted, please follow this link to read the full article - <https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/catholic-protest-sees-unfair-rules-scrapped/>

Churches praying to be treated like pubs

EXCLUSIVE

JAMES MORROW

SYDNEY'S Roman Catholic Archbishop Anthony Fisher is leading the charge of religious leaders concerned they are being left out in the cold as NSW moves to ease restrictions on the number of people allowed to gather in public.

From Monday, as many as 50 people will be allowed to visit a restaurant, pub, club, or cafe — but the number of worshippers allowed to gather together at a church, temple, or mosque will continue to be capped at just 10.

"Some of our churches are very much bigger than your average suburban restaurant," Archbishop Fisher said.

He has launched a petition on the Catholic Archdiocese's website aimed at the Berejiklian government asking that houses of worship be included in the new measures.

"We are not looking for special treatment, just equal treatment," he said. "We've co-operated at every step with the public health people and have shown we have been very responsible."

Archbishop Fisher pointed out that 12 people would be allowed under the new rules to catch a bus together to St Mary's Cathedral, but it was "absurd" that only 10 of

them would then be allowed in for mass — despite its 2600 sqm of floor space.

"We've given plans to the Premier on what we can do to minimise the risk in churches — marking where people can sit, stopping the passing of hymn books or collection plates, and asking the very elderly to stay at home in any case," he said.

Archbishop Fisher's concerns have been echoed by other faith groups.

NSW Jewish Board of Deputies chief executive Vic Alhadeff yesterday told The Daily Telegraph: "There is far less risk of infection in properly distanced religious

services and classes than in a pub, where glasses and other items may be passed around."

Australian National Imam's Council spokesman Bilal Rauf suggested that the state government needed to think about its priorities, noting that houses of worship are critical to the health and wellbeing of many people.

"Our general view is that there appears to be a disparity in the approach to dealing with clubs and poker machines as opposed to houses of worship," he said.

"It's difficult to understand why places of worship would be carved out and excluded while other businesses, particularly pubs and clubs, are allowed more people."

The Archdiocese's petition, which went online overnight at openourchurches.com.au, reads in part: "Contrary to

what has been said throughout this pandemic, we do not consider church attendance to be non-essential; indeed, nothing is more essential than the practise of our faith.

"This unequal treatment of religious worship leads us to ask whether the government is listening to the concerns of Catholics and other people of faith or indifferent to the effect the closure of our churches is having on people during these difficult times."

Financial support of St. Peter's Parish - Parishioners regularly comment that because they no longer carry cash, they are not able to put money on the collection plate. Cashless financial support of the parish is now very easy via the parish website. The very top line on the website contains a yellow box which says "**SUPPORT US**".

SUPPORT US

By clicking on this yellow coloured box at the right end of the website's headline, and following the prompts, one may donate and immediately receive an electronic or hard copy receipt. Of course, your parish still has ongoing costs and bills to pay during this time when the Sunday Mass collections are not happening.

Another new way of donating electronically is to scan the following QR Code with your mobile and then follow the prompts.



Tap and Go machines are now placed in the Church, if you wish to make a donation.

Second Phase of the re-opening of our churches – Please refer towards the end of Fr. John's reflection for temporary mass times and the parish website.

Pentecost Prayer

*Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit
That my thoughts may all be holy;*

*Act in me O Holy Spirit
That my works, too, maybe holy;*

*Draw my heart O Holy Spirit
That I love but what is holy;*

*Strengthen me O Holy Spirit
To defend that is holy;*

*Guard me then O Holy Spirit
That I always may be holy.*

Fr. John's reflection for this week

Towards the end of his Last Supper Discourse, Jesus told those with him at table, " ... it is for your good that I go; for if I do not go away, the Paraclete will not come to you." This Sunday we celebrate the coming of this Paraclete (Advocate) who is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus and of his Father. Last Sunday we commemorated the "going away" of the Lord, his Ascension, as a prelude to our celebration of the coming of his Spirit at the Pentecost.

On the next two Sundays we will celebrate the Solemnities of the Most Holy Trinity and Corpus Christi respectively. These four solemnities, the Ascension, Pentecost, the Trinity and Corpus Christi are all closely related.

Jesus "going away" does not mean that we in his Church are now separated from him. In this present age of the Church, which began with the Pentecost and will last until the end of time, he is still very much with us "in Spirit" here on earth. We are already also with him in heaven, where as the Risen Christ he sits "at the right hand of the Father". St. Augustine says that, "For just as he remained with us even after his ascension, so we too are already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies." The bodily presence of Jesus remains with us in various ways, says Augustine: "Christ is now exalted above the heavens, but he still suffers on earth all the pain that we, the members of his body, have to bear. He showed this when he cried out from above: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" and when he said: "I was hungry and you gave me food." (Obviously, the Lord is also here with us in sacramental bodily form via his sacraments and their ministers.) Augustine asks, "Why do we on earth not strive to find rest with him in heaven even now, through the faith, hope and love that unites us to him? While in heaven he is also with us; and we while on earth are with him. He is here with us by his divinity, his power and his love. We cannot be in heaven, as he is on earth, by divinity, but in him, we can be there by love."

The disciples endured a period of training and formation under Jesus in the years leading up to the coming of his Spirit with power at Pentecost. It is clear from the gospels that they were still attached to "the world" as in the sense in which this term is often used pejoratively by St. John in his gospel. They are nonetheless making slow progress towards a time when they would be ready and able to receive the Holy Spirit, that Spirit of the Risen Jesus and of his Father. These earlier promptings of the Spirit to lead us towards a new (spiritual) way of life are sometimes referred to as "pre-venient" graces, meaning graces given us before the coming and **abiding** of the Holy Spirit in a person, bringing all his gifts (wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord [cf Isaiah 11: 1-2]) and fruits (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control [Gal. 5]). The Holy Spirit is not able to come and make his home in a person who is still living an habitually unspiritual life!

Moreover, in his commentary on John's gospel, Saint Cyril of Alexandria reminds us that our Christian faith is not just about God and me. Concerning the spiritual unity which was very much in evidence among the believers at Pentecost, St. Cyril observes, "We all receive one and the same Spirit, I mean the Holy Spirit. So in a way we are blended together with one another and with God."

Even though we are many individuals and the Spirit dwells in each one of us individually, still the Spirit is really one and indivisible. And so that one Spirit binds together the separated spirits of each one of us so that we are seen to be one, together in Christ.

“Just as the power of Christ’s holy flesh makes into one body everyone in whom it exists”, says St. Cyril, “in the same way the Spirit of God, being indivisible, ties together the spirits in which it dwells.

“Again, St. Paul emphasized this point: Bear with one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience. Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together. There is one Body, one Spirit, just as you were all called into one and the same hope when you were called. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all, over all, through all and within all. As the one Spirit abides in us, the one God and Father will be with us through the Son, leading those who share the Spirit into unity with each other and with himself.”

Paralleling the unity very much in evidence at Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, this Parish of St. Peter has a long history of uniting people who have come to Sydney speaking many different languages from all over the world.

Next Sunday, Trinity Sunday, will see the resumption of Sunday Masses at St. Peter’s. For the foreseeable future, the Masses will be at 9am and 10.30am. Because of the NSW government limit of fifty people per Mass, it is still necessary to book a place or places by email to the parish email address. Please mention which Mass you would like to attend. The fifty places at each Mass will go to the first fifty people who apply for a place at that particular Mass. It is also important that I remind you all that the Archbishop’s dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains in place until he publicly announces otherwise. I will be sure to advise when His Grace has done that.

There is no longer any need to book a place for the weekday and Saturday Masses which will continue according to the following schedule:

- Saturday (30 May) - 9.30am
- Monday (Mary, Mother of the Church) - 5.15pm
- Tuesday - 5.15pm
- Wednesday - 5.15pm
- Thursday - 5.15pm
- Friday (St. Boniface) - 1.05pm
- Saturday (6 June) - 9.30am

Confessions - before Mass each weekday and Saturday.